



# FRA CONNECTOR

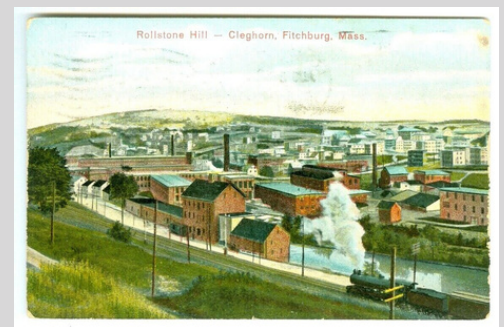
Volume 4 • September 2023

## EXTENDING OUR REACH

by Meagen Donoghue

If you've been following the FRA for a while, you may be aware that our 2040 Downtown Urban Renewal Plan was approved, and we are well on our way to implementing the goals and objectives of the meaty document. The plan only extends to the gateways of River and Water Streets to the east and west and to the Longsjo Middle School and Boulder drive to the north and south. While there is much work ahead of us in this district, the FRA listened to residents and community leaders and zeroed in on an opportunity to create a new second urban renewal plan/district.

With that said, we are excited to announce that at its July meeting, the FRA's Board of Directors voted unanimously to create a new urban renewal plan in the heart of **Lower Cleghorn**. We are in the very early stages of the process, but we are excited to do so in partnership with the City's Office of Planning and Community Development and the Neighborhood Works program sponsored by Mass Housing.



There will be opportunities for community input and involvement, so keep an eye on future social media posts on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages as well as on our website at [fitchburgredevelopment.com](https://www.fitchburgredevelopment.com). For more information on what an urban renewal plan and district are, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/urban-renewal-ur>.

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# APPROVED!

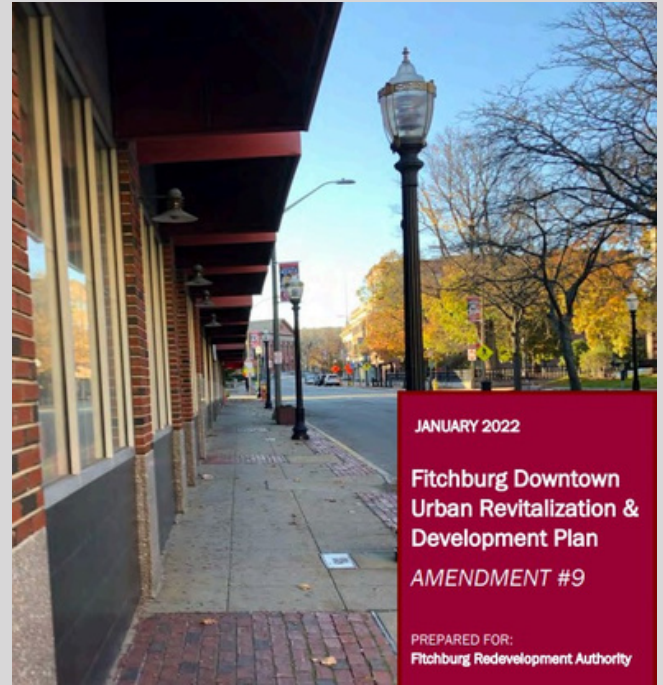
by Meagen Donoghue

In our snippet entitled “Extending our Reach,” we make note of the recent passing of our 2040 Downtown Urban Renewal Plan (the Plan). It was a two-year process, beginning in late 2019, that involved community input as well as local approvals from the City’s Planning Board who deemed the Plan aligned with their goals and objectives, as well as City Council who voted unanimously to approve it in January of 2021. The final local approval involved the FRA’s Board of Directors, who also voted to approve the Plan unanimously a few months later in May. What happened next was the Plan was sent to the Commonwealth’s Department of Housing and Community Development who thoroughly reviewed the materials to assure the Plan aligned with state regulations and requirements. Happily, this was approved in July of 2021. Yet the

approval process would not be over. What the FRA faced next was the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) process. This was a laborious process, which involved communicating with several state agencies indicating the environmental impacts the plan may have. However, because our Plan is an amendment of the 2020 plan (Amendment #9), the FRA was allowed to submit a Notice of Project Change, which was finally approved in July 2023.

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So, what do all of these approvals mean for the FRA? It means that we can move forward with the goals and objectives outlined in the 2040 Plan, which can be seen on our website at [fitchburgredevelopment.com](http://fitchburgredevelopment.com). Currently, the Board of Directors is identifying priorities as we leap into the plan, which we will write about in an upcoming newsletter.



JANUARY 2022

**Fitchburg Downtown  
Urban Revitalization &  
Development Plan**

**AMENDMENT #9**

PREPARED FOR:  
Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority

## FRA WELCOMES ROBERT HASCHE



Robert Hasche joined the FRA team as the Facilities Manager in May of 2023. He brings with him a wide range of expertise in many technical fields as well as a private business owner for nearly 25 years. His focus for the past 8 years has been facilities management, facilities design, facility construction, manufacturing, and oversight of CAPEX expenditures for a large manufacturing company and their retail locations.

Bob grew up in Stow and has lived in Westford for the past 30 years. He enjoys spending time with his wife and 3 grown children, on the ocean, working on various projects, and outdoor cooking.



# A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

by Meagen Donoghue

The FRA would like to thank Senator John Cronin and Representative Michael Kushmerek for their continued support of our organization. Through their efforts on Beacon Hill, they were able to secure a \$750,000 earmark for the FRA within the State's budget. Approved in late July by Governor Healy, the FRA will incorporate the funding into various projects to continue economic development efforts within the urban renewal district as outlined in the 2040 Downtown Urban Renewal Plan.



## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

by Sarah U. Stebulis

This past year I participated in the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce's Community Leadership Institute, under the sponsorship of my employer, The Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority. It was hands down one of the best professional experiences I've had. The Chamber is passionate about bringing together a diverse group of people and organizations to work together to learn more about leadership in our community, how we can be a catalyst for change, and how we can support in the communities in which we live and work. I learned so much through this experience, while also building connections and friendships, and getting involved in serving our community through multiple outreach initiatives. We developed 3 outreach programs, including a scholarship for non-traditional students for which we raised over \$14,000 in only a couple of months. Our goal was to make this a Legacy scholarship in the name of our CLI class, and I'm so excited that through the North Central Chamber of Commerce, we will be able to see that dream come to fruition and continue working together for our community for years to come.



## Design Grant Presented

The FRA granted a Design Grant to the guys at Prime Real Estate Investment, LLC for their beautiful project at 759 Main Street. We just love what they did with the place!

If you're a developer, building owner, or a business owner in the heart of downtown Fitchburg, check out our information about our grant opportunities on our webpage at [fitchburgredevelopment.com](http://fitchburgredevelopment.com).



## Visit the FRA at Trick or Treat on Main Street



**Saturday, October 28th**  
**12pm-2pm**  
**Academy to Prichard**

The City of Fitchburg's annual 'Trick or Treat on Main St.' is back!  
Over a thousand visit to get 🍬 tricks and 🍬 treats from businesses across Main Street.

- 🍔 Get some grub from local food trucks 🍕
- 🍏 Enjoy caramel apples and cider from Paupers Pantry. 🍏
- 🎮 Games, entertainment, and fun activities for all ages! 🎉

<https://trickortreatonmainstreet.simple.ink/>

### Let's stay in touch...

[www.fitchburgredevelopment.com](http://www.fitchburgredevelopment.com)

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### Follow us...

